

The Divine Life

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SRI SWAMI SIVANANDAJI MAHARAJ

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15th November '65

Sm. Lakshmi Raghu Rani
New Delhi.

The way was angaly step
by step. March on boldly.

Be calm. Be patient
Be courageous. Be regular

a gar med tsha.

Calmness is your strength

Patience is your power.

May God bless you Siramand

RELIGIOUS CALENDAR (Sivanandanagar)

NOVEMBER

- 1 All-Saints' Day
- 2 All-Souls' Day
- 4 Ekadasi
- 5 Pradosha Puja
- 7 Narakachaturdasi
- 7|8 Dipavali Amavasya; Sri
Lakshmi Puja
- 9 Govardhana Puja; Bali
Puja; Go-Puja
- 14 Sri Skanda - Shashthi
(According to Tamil
Calendar)
- 17 Sri Yajnavalkya Jayanti
- 18 Prabodhini Ekadasi
- 19 Utthana Dvadasi; Sri
Tulsi Puja; Chaturmas-
ya ends
- 20 Pradosha Puja
- 21 Sri Vaikuntha Chatur-
dasi
- 21|22 Purnima; Sri Guru
Nanak Jayanti



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Obeisance to the Supreme

य आत्मदा बलदा यस्य विश्व
उपासते प्रशिषं यस्य देवाः ॥

यस्य छायाऽमृतं यस्य मृत्युः
कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ॥

*Ya atmada balada yasya vishva
Upasate prasisham yasya devah;*

*Yasya chhaya-amritam yasya mrityuh
Kasmai devaya havisha vidhema.*

(RigVeda: X. 121. 2)

He, who is the Giver of spiritual knowledge and strength, whom the universe adores, whose command even the gods obey, whose shadow is immortality as well as death,—to Him, that is Resplendent, we offer our oblations and prayers.

Darkness Can Never Resist Light !

The nine-day worship of the Divine Mother has just been celebrated by millions of Hindus in the country. It is but proper that one should refresh one's memory about the real significance of this worship of the symbolic Power of the Cosmic Consciousness, which we call by different names as God, the Providence, the Immortal Spirit, and dedicate oneself afresh for the realisation of the goal of life.

The three aspects of the Devi puja are Goodness, Prosperity and Knowledge. Goodness reveals the truth, prosperity ushers in happiness and knowledge precedes the dawn of intuition and leads one to the goal. To strive to bring about these three factors into the life of mankind constitutes the real invocation and adoration of the Divine Mother who is manifest in every form of humanity.

The Puranic idea of the Mother Divine represents the triumph of the divine power over the myriads of dark forces of negativity in the struggle between the dual factors of good and evil, truth and untruth, virtue and vice, freedom and bondage, light and darkness. The occasion therefore is a reminder to the aspirant of the great cosmic law that the divine will always prevails ultimately over the demonical. It is a call to experience and express afresh the divine nature in man, make manifest the light of truth and to vanquish and conquer the forces of evil within. *Darkness can never resist light.* Truth, light and goodness are synonymous terms, they are the visible expressions of God. Through these positive forces the undivine elements, the negative forces can be effectively eliminated from the hearts and minds of the people. The positive must overcome the negative. The Call

of the Mother is to rouse oneself to this truth and to regulate one's life as a dynamic expression of Truth or Divinity—which is beyond the maddened-monkey-like mind, the highest of the high, which knows not union and separation and attachment, which is above the prating tongue and the wandering mind, and which is an ocean of full, undisturbed ecstasy.

Apparently the nine days' worship of Devi is in the nature of Vijaya-Utsava. These nine days' triumphs are offered to the Mother for Her successful struggle with the formidable demons led by Sumbha and Nisumbha. But to the spiritual aspirant in his life of Sadhana, the particular division of the Navaratri into sets of three days to adore different aspects of the Supreme Goddess has got a very sublime, yet thoroughly practical truth to reveal. In its cosmic aspect, it epitomises the stages of the evolution of man into God, from Jivahood to Sivahood. In its individual import, it shows the course that his spiritual Sadhana should take.

The central purpose of existence is to recognise one's eternal identity with the supreme spirit. It is to grow into the image of the Divine, which embodies the highest perfection. To recognise one's identity with that spotless purity, to attain union with That is surely to grow into the very likeness of the Divine. The Sadhak has therefore, as the initial step, to get rid first of all the countless impurities and the undivine elements that cling to him in his embodied state. Then he has to acquire lofty virtues, auspicious Divine qualities. Thus purified and rendered full of Sattwa, knowledge flashes upon him like the brilliant rays of the sun upon the crystal waters of perfectly calm lake.

This process of Sadhana implies resolute will, determined effort and arduous struggle. In other words, strength and infinite Sakti, is the prime necessity. It is the Divine Mother, Supreme Sakti of Brahman, that has to operate through the aspirant. The Sadhaka prays to Mother Durga to destroy all impurities, vices and defects. She is to fight with and annihilate the baser animal qualities in the Sadhak, the lower Asura in his nature. She is the power that protects his Sadhana from its many dangers and pitfalls. Thus the first three days, marking the first stage of destruction of impurities and determined effort and struggle to root out the evil vasanas in his mind, are set apart for the worship of the Destructive Aspect of the Mother.

Once the Sadhaka has accomplished his task on the negative side—that of breaking down the impure vasanas, propensities and old habits—the next step is to build up a sublime spiritual personality, to acquire positive qualities in place of eliminated Asuric qualities. The divine qualities, Daivi Sampath that Lord Krishna enumerated in the Gita, have to be acquired. The Sadhak must cultivate and develop all the auspicious qualities. He has to pile up immense spiritual wealth to enable him to pay the price of the rare gem of divine wisdom (Jnanaratna). If this development of the opposite qualities (Pratipaksha Bhavana) is not undertaken in right earnest, the old Asuric nature will raise its head again and again. Hence, this stage is as important in an aspirant's career as the previous one. The essential difference is: the former is a ruthless determined annihilation of the filthy egoistic lower self; the latter is an orderly, steady, calm and serene effort to develop purity. This pleasanter side of the aspirant's Sadhana is depicted by the worship of Mother Lakshmi. She bestows

on Her devotees the inexhaustible wealth of Daivi Sampath. Lakshmi is the Sampath-Dayini aspect of Brahman. She is Purity itself. Thus worship of Goddess Lakshmi is performed during the second set of three days.

When the aspirant succeeds in routing out the evil propensities and in developing Sattwic, pure, divine qualities, he becomes an Adhikari. He is ready now to receive the light of Supreme wisdom. He is fit to obtain Divine Knowledge. At this stage comes the devout worship of Sri Saraswati, who is Divine Knowledge personified, the embodiment of Brahmajnana. The sound of Her celestial Veena awakens the notes of the sublime Mahavakyas and the Pranava. She bestows the Knowledge of the Supreme Nada and then gives full Atmajnana as represented by Her pure dazzling snow-white apparel. To propitiate Saraswati, the Giver of Jnana or Knowledge is, therefore, the third stage.

The tenth day, Vijayadasami, marks the triumphant ovation of the Jiva at having attained Jivanmukti through the descent of knowledge by the grace of the Goddess Saraswati. The Jiva rests in His own Supreme Self of Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute). This day celebrates the victory, the achievement of the Goal.

This arrangement has also a special significance in the aspirant's spiritual evolution. It marks the stages of evolution which are indispensable for every Sadhaka, through which everyone should pass. One naturally leads to another and to short-circuit this would inevitably result in utter failure. These days many ignorant Sadhakas aim straight at the acquisition of knowledge without the preliminaries of puri-

fication and acquisition of Daivi Sampath and complain that they are not progressing in the Path. How can they? Knowledge will not descend till the impurities are washed out, and purity is developed.

Therefore let one's life be based on perfect righteousness and purity; let one's idealism and goodness be eminently practical; let one's virtue be effective and life-transforming; and let all aspire to be good and radiate goodness. The evolutionary process of nature works in stages, all creativity and constructiveness is modelled according to the law of evolution which is a process of unfoldment of real life and true growth. It results in permanent achievement. Therefore one has to cultivate all that is good and noble through positive and constructive process of growth.

If one wants happiness and well-being, one has to abstain from all acts of violence and malevolence, and experience and radiate wave after wave of peace, serenity and compassion. Life without selfishness, lust, anger, greed and vanity is itself divine life. To nurture the plant of love, one has to weed out the undergrowth of

jealousy, hatred, suspicion and revenge. The essence of religion in general consists in refraining from doing harm to anyone.

The central teachings of all the saints, prophets and men of wisdom are: not to do evil deeds, not to cause the slightest hurt even to the lowliest of the low, not to vilify anyone, not to gain at the cost of others, not to be deceitful and sly, not to choose the pleasant in preference to the good and not to be impure and unholy. May all work together to overcome evil by goodness, injustice by justice, hate by love, untruth by truth, selfishness by selflessness. May the blessings of the Mother Durga, Para-Sakti, lead all from the unreal to real, from darkness to light and from mortality to immortality! May peace be unto all!

Sarvamangala Mangalye Sive

Sarvarthasadhike

Saranye Tryambake Gauri Narayani

Namostute.

(O Narayani, Devi, the three eyed, the Refuge, the Auspiciousness, the Bestower of all wishes, the Blessedness that is in all that is blessed, prostrations unto Thee.)

—Editor.

JNANA YAGNA AT ITS BEST!

Knowledge is infinite and eternal and no limit can be set to it in this eternally mysterious world. The knowledge which is a means to the attainment of the Cosmic Consciousness can be attained only by the grace of the Preceptor. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj who has a great compassion for the suffering humanity has inborn eagerness to serve and an innate feeling of unity with all mankind. Fully immersed in Hindu spiritual lore, Swamiji draws lessons from the ancient Indian way of life which are of universal application, and seeks to apply them to modern conditions of society. Hundreds of books have been written and published—on religion, morals, ethics and philosophy—which are given away free worth in thousands just for the asking. According to the Official figures, books worth a sum of Rs. 59,289.50 were distributed free during the month of September 1961 in connection with the 75th Birthday celebrations, which obviously testifies to his genuine and deep love for humanity. Dissemination of spiritual knowledge is Swamiji's Mission and he calls it Jnana Yagna.

—Editor.

The Lord Appeared Before Me in the Form of Sri Krishna

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

"It would be easy to dismiss the question (Did Lord appear before you?) by saying 'Yes'. After a prolonged period of intense austerities and meditation while I was living in Swarga Ashram, during which I had the Darshan of a number of Maharshis and their blessings, the Lord appeared before me in the form of Sri Krishna.

"But that would not be the whole truth, nor a sufficient answer to a question relating to God, who is Infinite, Unlimited and beyond the reach of the speech and mind.

"Cosmic Consciousness is not an accident or chance. It is the summit accessible by a thorny path that has steep, slippery steps. I have ascended them, step by step, the hard way; but at every step, I have experienced God coming into my life and lifting me easily to the next step.

"My father was fond of ceremonial worship (Puja) in which he was very regular. To my child-mind, the Image he worshipped was God; and I delighted in helping father in worship by bringing him flowers and other articles of worship. The deep inner satisfaction that he and I derived from such worship implanted in my heart the deep conviction that God is in such images devoutly worshipped by His devotees. Thus did God come into my life first and placed my foot at the first rung of the ladder.

"As an adult, I was fond of gymnastics and vigorous exercises. I learnt fencing from a teacher who belonged to a low caste; he was a Harijan. I could go to him only for a few days before I was made to

understand that it was unbecoming of a caste Brahmin to play the student to an untouchable. I thought deeply over the matter. One moment I felt that the God whom we all worshipped in the image in my father's Puja-room had jumped over to the heart of this untouchable. He was my Guru, all right! So, I immediately went to him with flowers, sweets and clothes, and garlanded him, placed flowers at his feet and prostrated myself before him. Thus did God come into my life to remove the veil of caste distinctions.

"How very valuable this step was I could realise very soon after this, for, I was to enter the medical profession and serve all, and the persistence of caste distinction would have made that service a mockery. With this mist cleared by the Light of God, it was very easy and natural for me to serve everyone. I took very keen delight in every kind of service connected with healing and alleviation of human misery. If there was a good prescription for malaria, I felt that the whole world should know it the next moment. Any knowledge about the prevention of disease, promotion of health and healing of disease I was eager to acquire and share with all.

"Then God came into my life in the form of the sick in Malaya. It is difficult for me now to single out any instance and perhaps it is not necessary. Time and space are concepts of the mind and have no meaning in God. I can look back now upon the whole period of my stay in Malaya as a single event in which God came to me in the form of the sick and suffering. People are sick physically and mentally. To some, life is lingering death; and to some, death

is more welcome than life. Some lead a miserable life, unable to face death; some invite death and commit suicide unable to face life. The aspiration grew within me, that if God had not made this world merely as a hell where wicked people would be thrown to suffer, and if there was something other than this misery and this helpless existence, it should be known and experienced.

"It was at this crucial point in my life that God came to me as a religious mendicant who gave me the first lessons in Vedanta. The positive aspects of life here, and the real end and aim of human life were made apparent. This drew me from Malaya to the Himalaya. God came to me in the form of all-consuming aspiration to realise Him as the Self of all.

"Meditation and service went apace; and with them came various spiritual experiences till body, mind and intellect as the limiting adjuncts vanished and the whole universe shone in His light. God then came in the form of this light in which everything assumed a divine shape, pain and suffering that seemed to haunt everybody appeared to be a mirage, the illusion that ignorance creates, on account of low sensual appetites that lurk in man.

"One more milestone had to be passed in order to know 'Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma.' Early in 1950 (on the 8th Janu-

ary) God came to me in the form of a half-demented assailant, who disturbed the night Satsang at the Ashram. His attempt failed. I bowed to Him, worshipped him and sent him home. Evil exists to glorify the good! Evil is a superficial appearance; beneath its veil, the one Self shines in all.

"A noteworthy fact ought to be mentioned here. In this evolution, nothing gained previously is entirely discarded at any later stage. One coalesced into the next and the Yoga of Synthesis was the fruit. The effective and intelligent synthesis of Murti Puja, selfless service of the sick, meditation, the cultivation of cosmic love that transcended the barriers of caste, creed and religion with the ultimate aim of attaining Cosmic Consciousness was revealed. This knowledge had immediately to be shared. All this had become an integral part of my being.

"The mission had been gathering strength and spreading. It was in 1950 that I undertook the All-India Tour. Then God came to me in His Virat Swarupa—multitudes of devotees, eager to listen to the tenets of divine life. At every centre I felt that God spoke through me and He Himself in His Virat-Form spread out before me as the multitude listened to it. He sang with me; He prayed with me; He spoke and He listened. '*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*.'"

THE "DIVINE LIFE" SUBSCRIPTION RATES

The annual subscription for *The Divine Life* Magazines is Rs. 4.00; for two years Rs. 7.00; and for three years Rs. 10.00. Annual membership fee of the Divine Life Society is Rs. 2.50 (for which the monthly journal, *Wisdom-Light*, is supplied), and the admission fee is Rs. 5.00 (for which a copy of Swami Sivananda's *Essence of Yoga*, a rosary, etc., are provided).

DEEPAVALI MESSAGE :*It is the Avidya or Ignorance that Produces
A Semblance of Darkness !**(Sri Swami Sivananda)*

All Hindu festivals have a deep spiritual import or high religious significance. All big Hindu festivals have religious, social and hygienic elements in them. On every festival day, the place of habitaunce and the surroundings are thoroughly cleansed and decorated; all the members of the family bathe early in the morning and wear new or washed clothes. Every Hindu will have to do japa, kirtan, prayer, swadhyaya and meditation.

Man gets tired on account of hard and routine work. He wants some sort of change or variety or relaxation. He wants something to cheer him up. These festivals make him cheerful and happy and give him rest and peace.

The observance of Deepavali, Navaratri, Holi and other festivals goes a long way to protect religion, to destroy viciousness, to contribute happiness and to cultivate noble and virtuous qualities which will lead to attainment of eternal bliss and immortality. Hindu festivals and fasts are numerous. In every month there will be some sort of festival, vrata or observance. There will be continuous round of religious functions and festivals all through the year. Every eclipse, solar or lunar, is of much significance. Perhaps no nation in the world rejoices with festivals (Utsavas) qualified by fasts (Upavasa) and vigil (Jagarana or keeping awake at night) as the Hindus. To get up at 4 a.m. and take a bath, to do Sandhya, japa, meditation before sunrise, to study Gita, Ramayana, Bhagavata and the Upanishads, is the strong ingrained habit of every Hindu. These festivals give ample

opportunities for him to fill the heart with religious zeal and fervour and march forward in the path of Yoga. Every festival day reminds him the glory of God, necessity of Self-realisation, and thus goads him to soar higher and higher in the realms of eternal bliss and ultimately to merge himself in the Light of lights.

Dewali or Deepavali means a 'row of lights.' It falls on the last two days of the dark half of Asvina (Sept.-Oct.). Dewali is one of the numerous celebrations to which we are heir and which take us at once back to the thought of our own Godhead. This particular festivity has a deep significance in several ways. Waking up in the Brahmamuhurta (4 a.m. in the morning) is a great blessing from the standpoints of health, ethical discipline, efficiency in work and spiritual advancement. It is on Deepavali day that everyone wakes up early in the morning. Surely the Sages who instituted this custom must have cherished the hope that their descendants would realise its benefits and make it a regular daily habit.

Every individual wears new clothes. Often for the poor, this is the only new cloth for the year. The well-to-do present new clothes to their servants, and those who can afford, distribute clothes freely to the poor and the needy. Charity, especially in the matter of distribution of clothes, is freely resorted to, and thereby the heart expands. In a happy mood of great rejoicing, folks move about freely and mix with one another without reserve; all enmity is buried deep, people embrace each other in

fond love. Dewali is a great unifying factor. The vibrations produced by the greetings of love which fill the atmosphere are powerful enough to bring about a change of heart in every man and woman. Alas! How different the attitude is these days? Only a continuous celebration of Deepavali can re-awaken humanity to the urgent need of turning away from the path to ruin.

Deepavali is just a day's reminder of Rama Rajya. Mythology has it that it is on this sacred day that Sri Rama returned to Ayodhya after destroying the demons and established Rama-Rajya. May this Rama-Rajya be ushered in once again in our land soon, when there will be complete absence of hatred, ill-will or self-aggrandisement. People's hearts will be filled with thoughts of love, charity, compassion, tolerance and unselfishness. When these come to stay in the Indian heart, I call that a perpetual celebration of Deepavali! India alone can do it at the present time, because it is in her soil alone that this seed has been left unscorched.

Traders and Merchants turn over a new leaf on the Day of Dewali, the previous year's accounts are closed and fresh books are opened. How wonderful it will be if every Indian turned over a new leaf; close the previous year's account of recrimination, reprisals, retaliatory schemes of hatred, ill-will and rancour, and open a fresh book of love and tolerance. With that will surely dawn a new Era of Peace!

On Deepavali day Goddess Sri Lakshmi is invoked and the devotees pray to Her to bestow on all Her choicest blessings, in the shape of prosperity, peace and goodwill. He surrenders himself at Her Lotus Feet and seeks protection there.

Every household is illumined on this day and everywhere you look there are myriads of twinkling lights. This is intended to remind man that his essential nature is Light; that the Atman, his own real Self is the Light of all lights, the Light that lends luminosity throughout the creation. It is the Avidya or ignorance that produces a semblance of darkness.

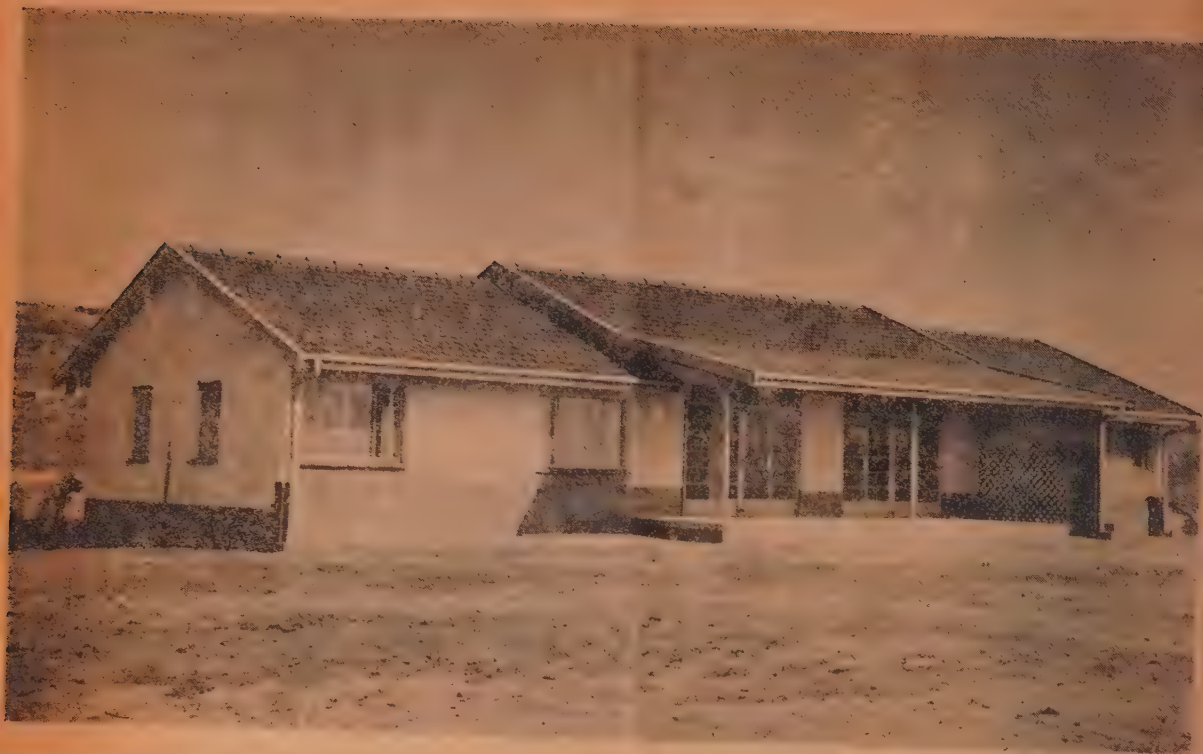
O Children of Light! On Dewali day worship Goddess Lakshmi the Abode of all virtues with faith and bhava which will release you from the clutches of Maya or ignorance. Pray to live in unbroken remembrance of the Supreme Truth which is to remain always in the region of Light, far beyond Maya's reach. Feel always that Flame burning brightly within your own Self. See that Light shining through every face and form. Try to recognise the unmistakable Presence behind every phenomenon. One who lives this way never strays away from the Right, from Dharma. He never loses sight of the Truth. He never falls into Darkness. May you all attain this freedom which knows no bounds and rest in peace!



Swami Chidananda holding a prayer meeting at the Divine Life Society Branch at Montevideo, South America. The Swami held regular classes on different aspects of Yoga, including group meditation, for about four months.



Sri Swamiji with YOGINDER, son of Rajkumar Tejendra Pratap Singh of Suratgarh. The child's birthday was celebrated in the Ashram on 24th October.



'Ananda Nivas', Yoga quarters for Sadhaks at Sivananda Ashram, Clare Estate, Durban. . Opened by Swami Venkatesananda on 3rd September when the Branch celebrated Gurudev's 75th Birthday.



Sri Swamiji with the Chairman and members of the Hindu Religious Endowments Commission, Govt. of India. To Swamiji's right are : Dr. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyer and Sri Sanker Saran and to the left, Sri Mahabir Prasad and Sri Kameswara Rao. Dr. Ramaswami Aiyer's daughter-in-law is sitting in front along with Swami Sivananda Hridayananda.

Religion is Something to be Lived and not to be Only Studied and Discussed.

(Dr. Radha Kumud Mukerjee, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., F.R.A.S.)

(Sri N.C. Ghosh, M.A., an ardent devotee of Sri Gurudev, who organized the 75th Birthday celebration at Calcutta has sent in the report of the speech given by Dr. Mukerjee who presided over the function. The speech is reproduced below which will be of interest to our readers.....Ed.)

"I feel honoured by your kind invitation to take part in this evening's function. We are assembled here today to celebrate the auspicious event of the advent to this world of one of its Supermen, H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. But as a layman I feel somewhat uneasy in having to address a religious meeting. The Hindu view is that religion is something to be lived and not to be only studied and discussed. To celebrate the holiday of the birth of a Saint involves a religious responsibility to which we must be equal. We must celebrate the occasion in a proper spirit. We must see how we can profit by the celebration and fulfil its purpose. That purpose is that we should feel that the Sage is re-born in us to lead us in our quest of Truth, our struggle for Self-fulfilment or Mukti. He has shown us in his life and lessons the steps on this process of Becoming by which man grows into God. To celebrate his birth is to apply his teachings to life.

"But religious life is not easy. It depends on the training and control of the mind so that it may concentrate on the contemplation of the Divine by releasing itself from the clutches of Matter, the pursuit of perishable objects, the fleeting pleasures of the moment. God has endowed man with the gift of Mind, the power of thinking so that he may think only of Him. To hug the perishable is to court Death. To run after the Deathless is to attain immortality. This is the only way to conquer

death, to become a Mrityunjaya. Life must be viewed in the light of Death.

"Hinduism defines religion by one word, 'Yoga'. Yoga is the joining together of two that are separate. It is the constant communion of Jeevatma with Paramatma, the individual soul with the Oversoul. Hinduism is so strict that it prescribes a condition of Temple-entry, a preliminary moral qualification, viz., that before offering worship to his Deity one must declare that he always sees before his eyes (Sadaa pasyanti) the Universal presence of God (Tad Vishnoh Paramam Padam). One is not entitled to worship God when he really worships Mammon at heart! Take not the name of God in vain. The religious man must utter His name in every breath of his being.

"The training of the mind in Yoga is a difficult process. It means the progressive detachment of mind from matter. 'Yogah chittavritti-nirodhah.' Yoga means the suspension of the mind's outgoing tendency. The training of the mind is to be effected in five stages. The lowest stage is that of Kshipta-chitta, where the chitta, mind is behaving madly by wandering from one object to another. The next higher stage is that of Vikshipta-chitta, where the mind shows lucid intervals in its madness by fixing itself at moments on one object. The third stage is marked by Mudha-chitta, where the chitta steeped in utter delusion

and ignorance, is mad after perishable objects like wealth or women. Religious life begins in the fourth stage of Ekagra-chitta, where the mind is capable of concentration on one point or subject, the contemplation of Atman as the only Reality. The religious process attains its culmination in the last stage described as Niruddha-chitta, the

stage of Nirodha, Nivritti, or Samadhi. This growth and expansion of the mind can be achieved only by means of established Vairagya and Abhyasa or uttermost self-exertion in keeping up the habit of mental concentration.

Let the Guru be an ever-present birth, an everlasting Presence in our hearts.

Skanda Shashti

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

Skanda Shashti is the six-day worship of Lord Skanda or Shanmukha. He is the spiritual son of Lord Siva. Lord Skanda is worshipped with intense devotion by a very large section of people throughout Southern India and Ceylon as well. Of the eighteen puranas Skanda Purana alone deals with the Avatar and Lilas of Lord Subramanya. The famous Temples of Lord Shanmukha in South India are, Tiruchendur, Palani, Tirupparankundram, Swamimalai, Tiruthanigai, Thiruppurur, Alagar Koil and almost all hillocks in South India especially in Tamil Nad shine with a temple of Lord Shanmukha.

The origin of Lord Skanda, the purpose of his avatar and its significance are of much importance to all seekers after Truth. During the battle between the Asuras and the Devas, the latter were much harassed and were unable to resist the onslaught of the Asuric forces. In despair the Devas approached Lord Siva and entreated Him to give them an able leader under whose heroic lead victory over the Asuras might be obtained. The Gracious Lord granted the request by creating the Mighty Divine Warrior, Lord Skanda out of His Divine Power or Achintya-Sakti. This great son of Lord Siva assumed the leadership of the celestial forces, organised them, inspired them and attacked the Asuric forces. The

Asuras were no match to the leader, Lord Subramanya, and were completely routed and a glorious victory was gained by the Devas. Thus it was through the prowess, guidance and able leadership of Lord Skanda that the Divine forces obtained victory over the demonical.

The foregoing depiction is quite analogous to the inner life of a spiritual aspirant and is precisely a similar struggle between the divine and the demonical aspects in him. A seeker's sadhana is this determined battle against the asuric forces that constantly try to drag him down into deeper darkness and lead him away from his ideal. Surely the Puranic demons are non-entities in strength and valour when compared to the anti-adhyatmic ones which an aspirant has to encounter every day and every moment of his spiritual life. At times he becomes so totally helpless under the violent attack of his lower nature that it seems as if all hope of progress is doomed to failure, and feels that he has fallen beyond redemption. He feels that he is doomed to failure.

But let all sadhakas take to heart that the compassion and grace of the All Merciful Lord is never-failing. It will never let you down, for the eternal law is, 'darkness cannot stand before light.' Make a whole-

hearted surrender at the feet of the Divine, just as the Devas surrendered to Lord Siva, and pray earnestly with all sincerity. Prayers are quiet communion wherein man speaks and God listens. True prayer opens the way for great power and ability to enter into one's own element. A sincere decisive prayer is always ready with a definite concrete answer. If you are earnest, the divine help will surely come, and in your heart there will spring up the routing torrent of Divine Sakti. The Lord's grace will become manifest to you in the form of inner Soul force. This power is the Skanda manifest in inner being to aid you in your battle against the lower asuric forces with its devilish minions like passion, anger, greed, deceit, falsehood, cruelty and thousand other aspects of evil. The descent of the Divine Grace with this Atma Bal, with this Skanda Sakti, will vanquish all the evil forces that attack you on the spiritual path and emerge triumphant and victorious. No more are you helpless!

Therefore Lord Kartikeya is the very embodiment of Divine Grace, and is the personification of the Daya or Kripa-Sakti of the Lord. The grace of the compassionate Lord, when prayerfully and sincerely invoked, manifests such irresistible Divine Power that all asuric forces fly away in holy terror at its mere approach. The

significance and the spiritual message embodied in Skanda Avatara is the message of supreme importance of Self-surrender, the high efficacy of sincere prayer and the unfailing compassion of the Lord, He will at once shower His Grace upon you. No real prayer from the bottom of one's heart ever remains unanswered.

The meaning of the very name Subramanya gives us a clue to His real identity. Subramanya means one who knows Brahman well. Brahman alone can know Brahman. Therefore Lord Subramanya is considered as Brahman. Yogis explain that the six heads of Lord Subramanya represent his six centres within. Each head is of the form of each Devata of the six Chakras. This way, too, we come to the conclusion that Lord Subramanya is Para Brahman and not a mere divine being. Meditation on Lord Subramanya is, according to the bhaktas, the surest way to obtain intuitive knowledge of Brahman.

May the glorious Lord Subramanya or Skanda inspire you all and infuse you with inner spiritual strength. May He lead you all to victorious triumph against the demons of nescience and worldliness. May He bless you all.

Om Sri Saravana Bhavaya Namah!

THE TOUCHSTONE OF KNOWLEDGE

Equal vision is the touchstone of knowledge. Unselfishness is the touchstone of virtue. Celebacy is the touchstone of ethics. Oneness is the touch stone of Self-realisation. Humility is the touchstone of devotion. Therefore, be unselfish, humble and pure.

—Swami Sivananda

Faith is a Golden Chain which Binds Us to the Feet of God !

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

Nothing in this age of progress and enlightenment has been so much misunderstood and misinterpreted as religion. Modern scientists of the day try to seek spiritual truths from material ones. But this is not the right way to attain spiritual knowledge. Perfect spiritual knowledge can be obtained only by spirit and through spirit alone. The real swarup of spirit or Atma can be known by chanting the name of the Lord with perfect faith.

Nowadays many people think that an image is a mere stone, mantras are merely letters and that a Guru is a mere man and so they do not care for these. But it is a great mistake of theirs. Our Sastras say that people of this temperament and attitude go and suffer in hell. We cannot have peace and salvation without faith.

In reality faith is our religion. In this Iron Age when the clouds of ignorance are covering the world, a storm of darkness or of Avidya is blowing strongly, only the light of Faith can help us in reaching our goal. But our faith must not be fleeting like the lightning. It must be constant as the Pole star in the firmament. Nothing in this world is impossible, if we have faith in ourselves. The history of this world is the history of few men who have faith in themselves. That faith calls out the Divinity within. We can do anything which we want with the help of faith. Owing to faith we can strive sufficiently to manifest infinite power. As soon as a man, a society or a nation loses faith in himself or itself, death comes. Without faith, when we are unable to obtain success in worldly matters, how is it possible to reach the highest goal of life? Faith and firmness are the most

essential steps to Self-realisation. Believe first in yourself and then in God. A handful of men can move the whole world with the help of faith. We need a heart to feel, a brain to conceive, a strong will to do work and a perfect faith to guide them all.

We should have faith in our scriptures, in the mantras and in the words of the Guru. Those who have implicit faith in the teachings of the Vedas and in the words of their Guru or the spiritual preceptor march fearlessly in the field of spirituality or truth and obtain freedom, perfection and salvation.

Ignorant people wander hither and thither in search of salvation but they fail in achieving it. The main cause of their failure is that they have no firm belief and perfect faith in one direction. If we want to make our life happy and fruitful, we should stick to one path and develop faith to a high degree in that direction. Faith can work miracles. The man who is endowed with supreme faith and who has mastery over his senses quickly gets supreme peace.

Lack of faith is a dangerous obstacle in the spiritual path. An aspirant begins to doubt whether God does exist or not, whether he is to succeed in his Self-realisation and whether he is doing his practices rightly or not. This is all due to the lack of faith. Mysterious are the effects of Maya. It misleads people through doubt and faithlessness. Whenever faithlessness tries to overpower us we should take shelter under the grace of Mahatmas or men of wisdom, and remain with them for some time under the influence of their spiritual currents. We should clear our doubts by conversing with them. We should develop

virtues, vairagya, patience, perseverance and a perfect faith to a maximum degree. We should have unshakable conviction in the existence of God and perfect faith in spiritual practices. Faith is a golden chain which binds us to the feet of God. We

should have faith that we will realise God in this birth or in the very next moment, if the All Merciful Lord so wills. God is quite close to that man who has perfect faith in himself, in the words of his Guru and in God.

The Basis of Human Unity—

(Sri Swami Chidananda)

[Talk given at East West Cultural Centre, Hollywood, U.S.A. on 16th February, 1961]

The ancient Vedas have from time immemorial sought to bring home to mankind the lofty message of the unity of existence, the oneness of all life. We have the declaration in the Vedas—"Duality is the cause of all sorrow." That is, from duality springs fear, great fear, and the truth is non-dual. One without a second. And all that is there, the entire universe that we see is nothing other than the Universal Reality. That alone appears as the entire universe. That alone is. All is, verily, the Absolute Reality, the Supreme Truth. These two when put together, bring the message to us that in Truth there is no duality and if we live in Truth we shall feel oneness spontaneously from the very fact of our being based upon the Consciousness of Truth which is oneness.

The true basis of human unity where all beings are at one is the factor that is the essential being within us. Superficial factors, they express diversity. There is a difference. In forms, all are different. Diversity, more than unity, seems to be the law of creation. In everything, everywhere upon the face of the earth we find diversity. Everything is different. No two leaves are alike. The five fingers of a hand are all different. Everything seems to be different, but even as a tree is full of diversity, is full of diverse branches, twisting twigs, leaves, flowers, fruits, it is rooted in unity.

The root is one. It springs from oneness. So, if you trace all diversity to its source, the apparent diversity is found to be based upon unity, based upon oneness—a singleness of source.

There could be a no more apt analogy to bring home to us the truth of the oneness of mankind than that of the tree with its diverse branches, shoots and twigs being founded upon one. Therefore, you have in the fifteenth Chapter of 'The Gita' this analogy used in the very first words which brings out the universe as being a great inverted tree of countless variegated names and forms, having its root in the one, the Supreme, the Changeless. The Lord says: "It has its roots above and diverse branches ramify in all directions, but they do not one whit affect or alter the essential oneness that is at its source;" so also the true basis of human unity.

Humanity is found to be so diverse—so many races, so many nationalities, so many strains, so many different languages, so many different cultures, customs, manners in eating, talking, dressing and living. Everything seems to be different and if we try to bring about a sort of superficial unity by forcing upon diverse mankind a single way of life, trying to make them speak a single language, trying to make them all follow a single type of living, education, dressing and eating, we

will not succeed, for we will not touch the innermost being in man. That is something much deeper than the appearance of humanity. The essential Being of humanity—that has to be touched if the sense of unity is to be roused within man. Uniformity is not unity. Uniformity will always be only appearance. In a vast army, full of regiments and battalions, to an observer, it appears as an absolute marvel of oneness. Everyone appears the same. They seem as one knit unit, but if you actually go into the hearts of each one, you will find a number of currents of disunity. It is when you touch the innermost being of man that you get at the factor which provides the ultimate rockbottom basis for unity.

There is something in all mankind which is the same everywhere, which does not alter at all, and which is the one common symbol of existence. It is the ultimate essence of the individual—his spiritual nature, his spiritual identity. The spiritual nature is the very nature of oneness, the very nature of unity. The bodies may differ, the language may differ, the culture may differ, but all beings do exist, all beings are. Everyone feels that 'I am'. This consciousness of being, the consciousness of existence is a principle which is a universal common factor underlying apparent diversity.

Beautifully has 'The Gita' brought out this Truth, it says: "As a necklace of variegated beads of diverse colours and shapes has as the one common factor the thread, which holds all these beads together which is the same in the centre of each and every bead." This thread is the universal common factor which is the same, which is the one in the apparent many. To give to humanity this awareness, this consciousness, a recognition of the essen-

tial divinity of the human being and the recognition of the existence of this divinity within all life, that spark, that principle of divinity, that principle of ineffable existence, imperishable existence, is in all life. That is the basis not only for all human unity, it is the basis of even Cosmic unity, if you recognise that things exist because God is in them, for He is the principle of existence within; He is the immortal life; He is Cosmic Eternal Existence. Changeless Eternal Existence is God and this principle of existence is common to everything—all life.

If there is anything that you can assert about all beings without fear of contradiction, it is this that they all exist. You may say that one thing is white and the other thing is black, and if you say about the white thing, 'this is black,' then someone will say, 'No it is not'; and if you say about the black thing, 'this is white,' someone will contradict, 'No it is not'; but the white thing is, it exists; and the black thing is, it exists. The principle of existence is the one universal Truth about all things that are in this universe which you can assert without fear of contradiction. And this principle of existence that all things are, that all things exist, the beingness in everything that there is in this universe, is the Divine Principle.

For the Divine, ultimately, is pure existence. It is life immortal. It is existence eternal. To recognise that and see in all, in everything, God dwells and, therefore, in the spirit we are all the same—we are all one. Apparently we be different, but we are all one in spirit. A scientist would say that no matter how widely divergent and different all things may appear to be, in the ultimate analysis all can be reduced to an absolute Cosmical unity. Ask the

Physicist, he will say that all things are ultimately just the variegated expression of the one ultimate principle of cosmic energy. He will reduce the whole universe into pure energy. Perhaps fifteen years ago the physicists would have said the whole universe is one in the atom, one in the electron and the protons. If you reduce all things unto their ultimate source principle, ultimate true principles, the world is one. There is no difference. All is one in that ultimate thing into which all things could be reduced—the atom. But now he says it is energy. Atoms are found to be energy. They are not inert, but full of energy. Only one step beyond, the Ancients have gone and realised the unity of all beings, of all existence. In their further intuitional experiences, they had found, they had experienced, that this ultimate energy, that this source of all existence is intelligence. It is consciousness. It is not something inert, but is full of consciousness. It is of the nature of radiant Self-awareness. So this radiant Self-awareness, or intelligence, they called 'God.' They call it Knowledge Divine, or Wisdom Divine, or God, and in God, therefore we are all one. We have our being from that Universal principle and we exist in that Universal principle, for it is infinite. There is no place where it is not and, ultimately, when out of this appearance we go back into being, we are one with Cosmical essence. So, we have our being and live in God and, ultimately, have our end in God. We live, move and have our being in God.

It is, therefore, in the recognition of the essential divinity of man that we have our surest basis of human unity. There, there is no difference. Names and forms

differ, thoughts differ, but all people know that they exist. The capitalist knows that he exists. The communist knows that he exists. The socialist knows that he exists. The militarist knows that he exists. Everyone, good, bad, indifferent, high, low, old or young, everyone knows that he exists and this life principle is one in all. Recognise this. Go beyond names and forms. Do not see changing appearances on the surface, but be always aware that—'I am one with all that lives in my essential Self as life. Life is one. I am one with all that lives in my essential being as pure light, pure being. Existence is one. Life is one. That has to be recognised. See God in all faces. Master says in the 'Universal Prayer' that we have to see God in all faces. If you see God and God alone in all faces, how can there be different things. Only God is there. In the high you see God. In the friend, in the foe. The people of little understanding, the people of petty mind, their calculations say, this is mine; he is mine; they are not mine; they are other. These people make these barriers. 'This is my son, my daughter, my husband, my mother, my father.' They are different and he feels some are his and the rest are not. That man with a large heart, to him indeed the whole world, all humanity is one great family. To those of large heart, the whole universe itself is one great family. He sees all as his own for he realises that which dwells within him, dwells in all, looks through the eyes of all. That which breaths within this body, it breaths through all bodies. So there is oneness of that principle which makes all life to live and move in this universe. That is the sign of wisdom.

(To be continued)

Essence of "Brahma Sutras"

(Sri K.S. Ramaswami Sastri)

[Continued from October, '61 issue]

ADHYAYA—III. PADA I

Adhikarana. 2. Sutras 8 to 11. The text shows that the *Punya Karma* (meritorious act) which leads a soul to heaven is not fully exhausted by enjoyment in heaven. The soul returns to the earth with *Anusaya* or *Karma Seshā*, i.e., a balance of the *Punya*. But for it there can be no enjoyment in boyhood. The text shows this. (Sutras 8 and 9). In this view there is no danger to *Achāra* as *Achāra* alone will lead to *Punya Karma*. (Sutra 10). *Badari* says that the words *Charāna* in *Ramaneeya charānaa* and *Kapoomacharānaa* refers to *Punya* and *Papa*.

Adhikarana. 3. Sutras 12 to 21. *Vidya* leads to *Brahman* and *Punya Karma* leads to *Swarga* (heaven) in the moon. Sinners do not go to the orb of the moon but go to hell. There are seven hells. There can be embodiments without conception in wombs (e.g., *Drona* and *Draupadi*). Among the four types of living beings (*Andaja*) i.e., born of eggs, (*Jarayuja*) i.e., born from the wombs, (*Swedaja*) born of sweat and (*Udbhijja*) born out of earth, the last two categories have no emergence from wombs.

Adhikarana. 4. Sutra 22. The text which says that the soul returning to the earth becomes *Akasa*, *Vayu*, *Dhooma* (smoke) *abhra* (cloud), rain etc., does not mean that they become *Akasa*, etc. It means that the soul is like *Akaas* etc. It descends with rain and passes into grain and then into man's body and then along with his semen into a woman's body. (Sutra 22.) The five fires in *Panchagni vidya* are Heaven, *Parjanya*, earth, man and woman.

Adhikarana. 5. Sutra 23. The soul is with *Akasa* etc., for a short while but is in the grain for a long while.

Adhikarana. 6. Sutras 24 to 27. The descending soul is not born as the grain but sticks to it. The grain has got its air soul. The grain is eaten by the man and becomes semen. The soul sticking to the grain sticks to the semen and attains embodiment in a woman's womb.

ADHYAYA—III. PADA II

Adhikarana 1. Sutras 1 to 6. In the former *Pada* the embodied soul's going and coming were described. In this *Pada* its three states (*Avasthas*) in the body are described.

In the Sutra *Sandhya* (twilight) refers to dream. While *Sri Saubara* says that Sutras 1 and 2 are *Purvapaksha* sutras and say that the soul creates the objects in dream, the third Sutra is the *Siddhanta* Sutra and says that God by his Divine power (*Maya*) creates the things seen in dreams.

The soul's creative power is obscured by *Karma*. From the Lord come its bondage and freedom. (Sutras 4 & 5.)

Some dreams are prophetic. When a man sees a beautiful woman in a dream he will get auspiciousness. If he sees a dark and black-toothed man in a dream, he will die soon. A soul will not itself create such an unpleasant dream. (Sutra 6.)

Adhikarana 2. Sutras 7 and 8. In deep sleep the soul rests in the nerves and *Pureetha* and *Brahman*. If you ask how these are together, we say that it is like resting on a cot in a palace. (Sutra 7.) When the soul wakes up, he returns from a state of union with *Brahman*. (Sutra 8.)

Adhikarana 3 Sutra 9. The soul returns from such union because of the power of Ajnana and because it has to enjoy the fruits of actions.

Adhikarana 4. Sutra 10. In swoon we do not experience external objects. But it is unlike sleep because in the latter the face looks happy but not in the former.

Adhikarana 5. Sutras 11 to 20. After thus dealing with the soul (Twampadartha) the Sutrakara proceeds to deal with the Tatpadartha (God).

The all-immanent God is in no way affected by the defects of the things in which He is immanent. God has no defects at all. He has got all auspicious

qualities. (Sutras 11 and 12.) The Sruthi *Dwaasuparna* shows this truth beyond doubt. (Sutra 13.)

God is in the body but unaffected by the soul's Karma. (Sutra 14.) He is Self-luminous consciousness (Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahmah). (Sutra 15). He is infinite knowledge but this is not inconsistent with his having Gunas, just as the fact that a diadem is of gold does not negate its being set with gems. (Sutra 16.) Thus God is Ubhayalingam (has a two-fold nature). (Sutra 17.) Just as a sun's image in water is unaffected by the defects of the water, God is unaffected by the defects of the things which He pervades. (Sutras 18 and 20.)

(To be continued)

Vivekachudamani

(Sri Swami Narayananda)

[Continued from October, '61 issue]

विमानभालम्ब्य शरीरमेतद्-
भुनक्त्यशेषान्विषयानुपस्थितान् ।
परेच्छया बालवदात्मवेत्ता
योऽव्यक्तलिङ्गेऽननुषक्तबाह्यः ॥५३६॥

539. Depending on the airship of this body, he enjoys like a child all pleasures of the senses that come in his way by the wish of others and which are brought to him by others. The knower of the Atman is not attached to external objects, nor has he any external marks.

Commentary: The knower of the self has no external marks, and so he cannot be recognised easily by others. It means that he does not adhere to any particular dress or mode of living. In the world, the military, the police, the Governor, etc., can be identified by their outward dress, etc., but there is no such thing for a Jnani.

The knower of the self flies aloft in regions unfathomable to the men of the world; hence the usage of the word 'aeroplane' in referring to the body. Though he does not fly in the air, his status is very high when compared to the ordinary man.

Objects of enjoyment which are made available to the Jnani by his followers he accepts. This does not mean sensual pleasures which the worldly man enjoys but only such of the items as food, clothing etc., required to keep his body going. This he has to attend to as long as the body lasts.

It also means that the knower of the self does not strive for food. Knowing his need people around him make things available to him. The people around him take care of his body just as parents take care of their children.

दिगम्बरो बापि च साम्बरो वा

त्वगम्बरो वापि चिदम्बरस्थः ।

उन्मत्तवद्बापि च बालवद्वा

पिशाचवद्बापि चरत्यवन्याम् ॥५४०॥

540. Either wearing nothing or wearing clothes or wearing skins, like one drunken or like a child or a devil, the knower of the self who stays in the Atman moves about in this world.

Commentary: Having no fixed mode of life or clothing, like unto a child the Jnani moves about here and there. Like unto a dry leaf that is blown from place to place by the wind, the knower moves from place to place without a purpose of his own. His body is moved by the Divine.

कामात्रीकामरूपी संश्रत्येकचरो मुनिः ।

स्वात्मनैव सदा तुष्टः स्वयं सर्वात्मना स्थितः ॥५४१॥

541. Enjoying objects with no attachment to them the sage moves about all alone. He is satisfied in his own self. He stays in all as the all.

Commentary:—The sage of realisation has cosmic realisation. He sees himself in all and all in himself. This is the stage of Sarvatma Sthiti.

He keeps no company lest he may not be dragged to worldliness again. Unevolved souls always think, talk and at times act contrary to their settled views. So the sage always wishes to be aloof and undisturbed in any way.

(To be continued)

HUMAN LIFE—ITS DURATION IS MOMENTARY!...

'Human life! Its duration is momentary, its substance in perpetual flux, its senses dim, its physical organism perishable, its consciousness a vortex, its destiny dark, its repute uncertain—in fact, the material element is a rolling stream, the spiritual element dreams and vapour, life a war and a sojourn in a far country, fame oblivion. What can see us through? One thing and one only—Philosophy; and that means keeping the spirit within us unspoiled and undishonoured, not giving way to pleasure or pain, never acting unthinkingly or deceitfully or insincerely, and never being dependent on the moral support of others. It also means taking what comes contentedly as all part of the process to which we owe our own being; and, above all, it means facing Death calmly-taking it simply as a dissolution of the atoms of which every living organism is composed. Their perpetual transformation does not hurt the atoms, so why should one mind the whole organism being transformed and dissolved? It is a law of Nature and Natural Law can never be wrong.'

—Marcus Aurelius.

*Guru Purnima Message:**(Translated into French by Princess Evrard de Arenberg, Brussels)*

Message de Sri Swami Sivananda

Pour Guru Purnima, 27th Juillet 1961**LES PENSEES NOBLES DEVERSENT DES FLOTS DE LUMIERE SUR NOS VIES**

Vous pourriez creer une etoile et la placer sur son orbite et pourtant n'avoir rien fait d'aussi memorable aux yeux de Dieu que celui qui lance au travers des generations de tous les temps une noble pensee aureolee d'or ! Peutetre avez-vous l'habitude de sous-estimer la valeur de ce a quoi nous pensons. Cela est du en particulier au fait que le monde doit encore en arriver a se rendre compte des effets merveilleux que donne l'emploi de ce puissant intermediaire, la pensee.

Bien que ce sujet soit d'importance vitale pour l'homme, on semble ne pas y apporter toute l'attention qu'il merite, vu sa portee. C'est pourquoi il serait bon que chacun d'entre nous fasse des recherches aussi approfondies que possible pour trouver des suggestions definitives a faire sur la ligne de conduite particuliere a suivre afin de rendre accessible la pensee vraie.

Les anciens Rishis etaient des Voyants de la pensee et ont temoigne d'une spiritualite et d'une sagesse dont les phases sont sans paralleles a aucune autre epoque et sans doute dans aucun autre pays. Pendant leur meditation, ils possedaient la dexterite d'effacer l'agitation mentale, arrivant ainsi a cette fixation d'esprit ou le plan de la conscience divine est atteint. Il n'est donc pas surprenant que ces hommes, fermement fixes dans leurs croyances et capables de diriger la portee de leur vision sur le monde invisible, aient pu, leurs vies se trouvant etablies sur le plan de la verite la plus haute, ressentir toute la force et l'elevation que leur donnait leur religion. Ils transmettent leurs convictions a bon nombre de

leurs freres humains car leurs croyances etaient moins une foi que la certitude d'une connaissance absolue: celle que l'Etre supreme noyau central du coeur meme des choses, etait realise par eux au plus profond d'eux-memes comme la vie de leur vie et le souffle de leur souffle. La revendication de ce privilege a ete celle des Yogis au cours des ages et, par la position unique dans laquelle ils se trouvaient, la verification de leurs realisations est entierement conclusive tant en ce qui concerne les phenomenes etranges attribues a leur vue et a leur ouie que ceux de bonheur transcendant la pensee humaine dans lequel ils se fondaient.

Quand l'intellect est purifie, toute la nature est purifiee. Quand toute la nature est purifiee, la memoire s'affermirait. Et quand la memoire du Soi devient stable, alors tous les liens qui nous attachent a toute autre croyance que celle du Soi se denouent. Ces idees se sont fait jour necessairement, lentement, parmi les hommes; mais avec l'accroissement de la spiritualite, il y a espoir que les gens deviennent plus receptifs. Neanmoins, seul un tres petit nombre d'humains est capable de fondre sa propre personnalite dans une personnalite ideale, car ceci est le don le plus eleve et le plus rare qui soit.

Dans notre monde actuel, parmi les ruines de systemes de pensee decadents, nous apercevons les lueurs d'une nouvelle clarte s'animant au coeur d'hommes et de femmes serieux et sans doute, bientot, cette force souveraine de la pensee sera mieux comprise—ce qui equivaut a dire que nos relations avec le principe fondamental de

la verite, dont nous sommes les representants, sera percu et reconnu. Les resultats de cette force subtile sont veritablement bien grands, car celle-ci s'etend des occupations les plus futiles aux travaux les plus importants de la vie. Et, selon le degre de sa spiritualite, elle devient plus puissante et plus intense. Les pensees nobles deversent un flot de lumiere dans nos existences, en en faisant surgir le caractere vertueux, en purifiant nos facultes intellectuelles, en transformant notre nature spirituelle et en les reliant graduellement avec l'esprit en nous comme avec tout ce qui est vrai et beau. Cette declaration ne sera pas tenue pour extravagante si nous savons nous souvenir de ce facteur essentiel et l'apprecier: que les pensees sont constructives et qu'elles sont l'avantcoureur de nos actes. Il s'ensuit que les bonnes pensees produiront tout ce qui est bon et noble, nous unissant par des liens invisibles aux esprits de tendance analogue qui agissent et reagissent les uns sur les autres. De meme, les pensees mauvaises reviennent comme des boumerangs, produisant discorde et desunion.

Nous le savons: une seule de pensees peut nous posseder a un meme moment. Nous devrions donc avoir conscience de la necessite de controler la croissance d'idees trompeuses et indesirables, les chasser immediatement pour leur substituer de bonnes idees, etablissant ainsi des courants harmonieux capables de produire des conditions d'abondante sympathie.

Tout comme les corps deviennent vigoureux par des exercices appropries, la pensee honnete et vertueuse croit en force selon l'usage que nous faisons de ses capacites.

Chacun de nous possede une abondante energie de puissance de pensee.

Le probleme toutefois est de savoir comment la diriger et quel ultime objet doit en etre le but. Il est tres necessaire de

canaliser nos efforts vers la pensee bienfaisante, car l'attitude mentale que nous prenons quand nous voulons nous mettre au travail affecte le succes ou l'insucces qui y sont relatifs. C'est seulement quand nous avons maitrise le secret de la puissance de la pensee, vrai facteur determinant de notre vie, que nous pouvons incarner dans notre existence exterieure nos ideaux les plus eleves. Le controle de la pensee doit donc etre acquis par la concentration et notre receptivite vis a vis d'elle est un facteur d'importance primordiale pour notre veritable progres. Ce principe est simple, l'application en est aisee, nous devons seulement etre sincerés dans nos efforts pour la mettre en action. Le principe consiste a degager un sujet du courant des idees toujours changeantes qui nous distraient et de demeurer centres uniquement sur ce sujet, nous laissant penetrer par cette illumination qui, en fin de compte, nous mene a l'union avec le Soi supreme. L'entrainement regulier de la pensee tend vers ce developpement et rend possibles en nous les vibrations les plus elevees de cette puissance la plus forte parmi les pouvoirs invisibles.

Quand nos vies sont dirigees par un principe sain et bien compris, nos actions se suffisent a elles-memes et deviennent effectives. Meme dans des circonstances adverses, quand les choses pesent lourdement sur nous, nous pouvons nous elever au dessus de toute anxiété, et melancolie au moyen d'un tel principe, comme l'ont fait les hommes et les femmes les plus braves et les plus nobles de tous les ages.

Maintenant, si nous voulons mettre cela en pratique, nous devons d'abord traiter avec l'interieur avant de pouvoir nous en prendre effectivement au dehors. Les soucis mentaux, les pressentiments et les pensees enervantes ont tendance a disperser, a affaiblir et a desorganiser les puissances de l'esprit et les forces vibratoires

interieures. Ce n'est que par l'appel au Soi supreme que l'esprit est fortifie. Toute chose prend caractere selon l'etat interieur de notre esprit. Il est impossible d'avoir en meme temps l'experience du bien et celle du mal, ou pour ainsi dire, d'etre exterieurement dans un lieu qui soit ciel ou enfer sans que nous nous sentions interieurement dans un etat celeste ou infernal. La pensee dirige le monde, etant inseparable respectivement de son expression exterieure et interieure.

Si vous revetez votre pensee de paroles positives et vivantes, vous pouvez regir votre vie. Les pensees negatives sont basses et aveugles et causent une perte vitale de puissance. Spiritualisez votre pensee, vos paroles et vos actions et elles deviendront significatives et douces.

Pensez en termes de consciencie, de vitale realisation de l'esprit, de la vie infinie. Les pensees basses vous emprisonnent, les pensees nobles vous liberent. Vous n'attirez pas ce que vous desirez, mais vous etes lie a ce que vous etes. Vous ne recevez pas ce pour quoi vous priez et pui fait l'objet de vos vœux mais ce que vous avez justement merite. Vos desirs et vos prieres sont gratifies et il y est repondu quand ils s'harmonisent avec vos pensees et vos actions. Vous ne devriez pas vous revolter constamment contre un effet qui se manifeste au dehors quand vous en nourrissez et en preservez interieurement la cause dans votre coeur.

La fonction principale de la pensee en nous est d'aviver la sensibilite de l'esprit, de l'inciter a un nouvel effort createur, de nous stimuler pour que nous amenions davantage la vie humaine a l'unisson de nos veritables ideaux.

De plus, la loi immuable de la nature que chaque atome de l'univers doit servir a une fin ultime prevaut eternellement et ne peut pas etre releeue definitivement par

l'homme. Que ce fait inspire a nos coeurs des desseins nobles et que l'application de ces verites a nos efforts nous donne la possibilite de vivre pour le bien, d'etre des travailleurs serieux et capables, au service de ce monde.

Reveillons au coeur des autres hommes et femmes le desir des memes buts eleves et aidons les autres ames, a qui leur milieu ne donne pas les avantages dont nous disposons, a surmonter leur ignorance et la faiblesse qui en decoule. Dans nos efforts pour nous unir a la loi d'unite, nous devrions nous souvenir que l'un de ses principes fondamentaux est de servir et que le controle le plus sur de nos propres capacites et de la sincerite de nos vœux est demontre par la consecration de nos vies au service d'autres parties du grand Tout unique afin que nous devenions des representants vivants de notre divine origine.

Nous devrions maintenir les activites exterieures de notre vie dans un courant d'amour, melant a cet amour la verite parce que les vibrations de l'amour sont, par la pensee de l'homme, les agents renovateurs de la puissance de cette Verite. Nous ne pouvons exercer aucune influence notoire sans vivre une vie d'amour, de pitie sans limites et de compassion, pour nos freres humains.

Avec un amour tendre dans nos ames et de vibrantes pensees d'affinite a l'egard de toutes les creatures, il nous est tellement plus facile de prendre notre place comme serviteurs de l'humanite, en comprenant l'immensite de notre vraie nature, en en estimant la valeur et la sagesse et en nous voyant tous dans le SOI unique et vrai, de meme que le SOI unique en tous. Prashna Upanishad dit: "Qui connait en verite CELUI qui ne perd jamais son eclat, en qui le soi conscient repose, avec toutes les intelligences qui gouvernent, les sens et les elements, lui, celui qui sait tout, penetrer

vraiment en tous c'est-à-dire qu'il réalise qu'il est le Soi ou l'Atman dans tous les êtres et qu'il se sent lui-même exister en tous."

Puissiez-vous tous obtenir la grâce de Dieu par vos nobles pensées, vos actions, votre foi, votre dévotion. Dieu puisse-t-il reprendre ses grâces sur vous tous.

Ashram News and Notes

HINDU RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS COMMISSION, GOI., VISITS ASHRAM

The Hindu Religious Endowments Commission, Government of India under the Chairmanship of Dr. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyer along with the Members paid a visit to the Divine Life Society Headquarters, Sivanandanagar on 1st October, 1961. Among those who accompanied the Chairman were Sri Sanker Saran, Sri Mahabir Prasad, Sri Kameswara Rao and Swami Harinarayanandaji, all members of the Commission. The Chairman, in a brief statement explained the aims and objects of the Commission and expressed his wish to elicit the opinion of H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj as to the mode of application of the funds that may be available from Mutts and Mandirs for practical work. The point mainly discussed was whether the funds of the Temples and Mutts etc., are to be utilised only for the purposes of religious worship and its propaganda or whether

a portion of the funds could be used for humanitarian purposes, such as educational activities, medical relief and the like. His Holiness opined that he could not consider humanitarian work as isolated from spiritual and religious activities, and it was certainly advisable that any surplus amount that might be available from Mutts and Mandirs should be used for such works as giving education, medical relief etc. His Holiness remarked that as human progress was integral, no aspect of the humanity could be ignored as irreligious or unspiritual, but every side had to be brought together under the purview of the comprehensive process of spiritual unfoldment. The discussion 'on these lines' lasted for about two hours and at the conclusion, the Chairman and Members of the Commission thanked His Holiness for his esteemed opinion and advice.

NAVARATRI PUJA

The annual Navaratri celebration was conducted at Sivanandashram with a nine-day worship of Mother Para Sakti in Her three aspects (namely, Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati) from 10th to 19th October 1961. The daily programme consisted of special worship with Archana, Havana, recitation of Durga Saptasati, Devi Stotras, Devi Kirtans and prayer. On a specially erected altar, which was tastefully decorated and beautifully illuminated, the images of the Divine Mother were installed. Among those who gave music perform-

ances (both vocal and instrumental) during the Navaratri celebration, mention may be made of the following: Besh Rajya Lakshmi Devi, Rani Chandrawati Singh of Gaya and children, Srimati Rajalakshmi and children, Swami Sivananda-Hridayananda, Swami Umasankarananda and Sri Krishnapremananda. Besides, there were solo and group Vina recitals under the guidance and direction of Swami Vidyananda. Sri Srinivasa Badarayana from Gujerat gave a demonstration of Indian classical dances.

ALL INDIA YOGA-VEDANTA CONFERENCE

The 45th All India Yoga-Vedanta Conference and Sadhana Week were conducted at this Headquarters commencing from 15th to 18th October under the general guidance of Sri Swami Siva-

nandaji Maharaj. On all the four days the programme consisted of four sessions daily: at early dawn (at 4 a.m.), forenoon, afternoon, and at night. In the morning the items were: group

meditation common prayer, Mantra Japa, recitation of Slokas from the Gita and the Upanishads followed by Yogasana exercises. In the forenoon and afternoons discourses were conducted on different aspects of Yoga and spiritual subjects in general; and at nights Sankirtans, Bhajans, devotional and classical music performances were conducted. Talks given by the various speakers included such subjects as the philosophy of the Bhagavat Gita, the Upanishads, the four main branches of Yoga and various aspects of Sadhana, and discussed the practical applicability of their spiritual values in the life of an individual and their social cultural relationship with man.

The 23rd Session of All-World Sadhus' Federation was held on 16th October presided over by Sri Swami Krishnananda who in a brief talk explained the aims and objects of the Federation. Swami Jyotirmayananda, Swami Omtatsatananda, Swami Ishwarananda, who spoke on the occasion pointed out that true Sadhus are great benefactors of mankind for, they embody the spiritual values of life—the glorious ideals of renunciation and universal love. The Federation aims at integration of Sadhus so that their combined efforts will be

a source of inspiration and guidance for the whole of humanity.

The 25th All-World Religious Federation was held on 17th October, when discussions were held on the unity of all religions and emphasised the need for the effective propagation of the underlying unity of all religions which will inculcate in the minds of men the noble ideals of tolerance and deep sympathetic understanding of each other's beliefs. Laudable suggestions were given to step up the work of the Federation in the practical field.

On the final day, in the forenoon Durga Puja was conducted with all solemnity and in the afternoon, Jnana Yoga was the subject discussed. The speakers pointed out that Jnana Marga was the fourth method and it was the path of right knowledge and discrimination. Jnana was for those who were intellectual, discriminative and of a philosophical nature. It explained in clear terms the fundamental principles of spirituality and attainment of the ultimate Truth. Later in the evening at the Satsang, Sri Swamiji distributed prizes to the Sadhakas who came out successful in various competitions, such as Asanas, Mantra-writing, etc., held during the Sadhana Week.

SWAMI BRAHMANANDA RETURNS FROM EUROPEAN TOUR

On invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Sonderegger of Bern, Sri Swami Brahmananda of this Headquarters visited Switzerland and other European countries during the months April to October 1961. During the Swami's sojourn in Bern as the guest of Sondereggers (a very noble couple and ardent disciples of Sri Gurudev), he conducted weekly prayer meetings which though informal at the beginning became popular later. More and more people, it has been disclosed, began to show genuine interest in the Satsangs, and were eager to learn about the philosophy of India, the wisdom of

the ancient Upanishads. Among the distinguished guests who attended the meetings, was Mrs. Vellodi, wife of H.E. the Indian Ambassador. The Swami's stay in Switzerland gave him the opportunity to visit the E.D.L.S. centre at Trogen and the D.L.S. Branch at Winterthur and to conduct prayer meetings. Prior to his return back to India, the Swami visited many cities and towns in Switzerland, Germany and Italy. A very warm send-off was accorded to the Swami on his departure from Switzerland.

VISITORS

The following were among those who visited the Ashram during the month of October to have Sri Swamiji's Darshan and also in connection with the Navaratri celebrations:

Dr. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyer, Chairman, and Members of the Hindu Religious Endowments Commission, GOI., H.E. the Governor of Orissa, Sri Y.N. Sukhthankar and Mrs. Sudha Sukhthan-

kar, T.L. Venkatarama Aiyer, Chairman, Law Commission GOI., New Delhi, Sri O.V. Ramdorai, Dy. Fin. Adviser to the Government, Ministry of Health, New Delhi, Sri B.B. Gujral, Jt. Secretary, export and import, Govt. of India, Ministry of Commerce, New Delhi, Col. V. Subramanyam, Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University, Rani Chandrawati Devi and children from Dehra Dun, Col. M. Shankla and Mrs. Shankla from Bombay, Lt. Col. R.R. Rao and family from Bareilly, Major K.D. Hiranandani, I.M.A., Dehra Dun, Major K.V. Jannardan from Dinapur Cantt., Fl.Lt. N.K. Mallik

from Delhi Cantt., Dr. S.N. Mankad from Bombay, Dr. A.L. Varma from Dinapur Cantt., Mrs. R.D. Aiyer from New Delhi, Sri Ramakrishna Prasad and family, Sri Om Narayanji, Sri T. Elumalai and party from Madras, Mata Aparna Devi and party from Calcutta, Sri R.S. Gopalan from Calcutta, Sri Tara Chand Patnayak from Jamshedpur, Sri B.P. Gupta, B.H.U., Varanasi, Sri V. Sundaram, National Administrative Academy, Mussoorie, Sri Prem Pall Chatrak, Sri Chowria from Delhi and Srimati S. Rajeswari from D.L.S., Ladies Section Bangalore.

OTHER ITEMS OF ASHRAM NEWS

GUJERAT BHAWAN

On 19th October, on Vijayadasami day, the foundation stone for the 'Gujerat Bhavan' building, which is to be constructed shortly in the Ashram premises, was laid. The Ashram's Purohit, Sri Murali Dhar, who officiated as the priest, performed the foundation laying ceremony reciting the appropriate Veda Mantras. Senior Mahatmas and other Ashramites took part in the ceremony.

BIRTHDAY

With a simple but a well got-up function, the

first birthday of Sri YOGINDER, son of Rajkumar Tejendra Pratap Singh and Besh Rajyalakshmi Devi of Surathgarh was celebrated in the Ashram. A Havana for the health and long life of the child was performed at Sri Viswanath Mandir in the forenoon. At noon there was a feast for all the members of the Ashram. At the evening Satsang Sri Gurudev blessed the birthday-baby and wished the child Vidya, Tushti, Pushti and Divine Aiswaryas.

ALL INDIA DIVINE LIFE CONFERENCE AT MADRAS

Under the auspices of the Divine Life Society Branch, Madras, it is proposed to hold the 14th All India Divine Life Conference at Madras city for five days from 21st to 25th December 1961. Sri Om Narayanji, under whose guidance and management the Conference will be held, informs this Headquarters that cordial invitations are being issued to the following personalities:

H.E. the Governor of Madras, Sri Vishnu Ram Medhi, H.E. the Governor of Kerala, Sri V.V. Giri, Maharishi, Kaviyogi Shuddhananda Bharati, Sri Swami Rajeswaranandaji Maharaj, Sri Kripānanda

Wariyar, Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan, Sri K.S. Ramaswamy Sastriyar, Sri Anantarama Dikshitar, Swami Omkarji of Waltair, Sri Sri Ram of Adayar, Sri K.S. Raman and others. It is fondly hoped that most of these august personalities will grace the function by their presence. Further details of the Conference when received from the Organisers will be published in our future Issue.

We have no hesitation to believe that members of other Branches will readily co-operate with the Organisers of the Conference by giving their active support and make the function a glorious success.

PRAYER HALL OPENED AT SIVANANDA ASHRAM, MYSORE

Under the auspices of the 'Sri Swami Sivananda Ashram' (D.L.S. Branch) Mysore, a grand function was held on 19th October '61, presided over by H.H. Sri Swami Hariharananda Bharati of Bangalore, which marked the opening of the newly constructed Prayer Hall. Sri Bharatiji, while unveiling the portrait of H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, spoke eloquently on the need for such Prayer Halls and appreciated the very pious efforts of the members of the D.L.S. Branch, particularly its Secretary, Sri V. Lakshman Rao Jagatap. Later Sri A.L. Shivarudrappa, M.A., Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Mysore, gave a talk befitting the occasion. Mention is made of the very generous donation of Rs. 1001 made by Sri M.C. Devaraj Urs towards the construction of the Prayer Hall.

SIVANANDA EYE-RELIEF AND DENTAL CAMP AT WANKANER

Sri Nanabhai K. Patel, Secretary, D.L.S. Branch, Wankaner has given information to the effect that under the aegis of the Branch, a combined Eye-relief and Dental Camp will be conducted from 12th to 18th November at Sri Visashrimali Sthankavasi Thata Tapagachcha Bhojanasala, Wankaner. An eminent Dental Surgeon from Rajkot will examine and treat dental cases from 12th to 15th November. Eye diseases of various types will be examined, treated and operations performed by the Eye-Surgeon, Dr. B.G. Adhvaryoo of Saurashtra Central Hospital. It is anticipated by the Organisers that people residing in Wankaner Taluka and nearby villages will turn up in hundreds and derive the benefit of this free medical aid provided. It may be noted that this is the second Camp of its kind which is made possible due to the sincere efforts of Sri Nanabhai K. Patel and his band of selfless workers.

ALL INDIA VEDANTA CONFERENCE AT DELHI & AMRITSAR

On invitation from Sri Swami Chetanananda Chidakasi, President, Sri Satya Dharma Mandal, Delhi, Swami Jyotirmayananda represented this Headquarters at the Conference held at Delhi from 20th to 23rd October. The Swami gave three discourses on 'Vedanta in Practical Life', 'Vedanta as Universal Religion' and 'Spiritual Sadhana.' He also read the message of H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj to the Conference. Swami Jyotirmayananda attended a similar Conference held at Amritsar from 4th to 6th November organised by Sri Nirmalji Maharaj of Vedanta-Niketan of Amritsar. The Swami read the message of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj for the occasion and spoke on the subjects of 'Vedanta' and 'Sadhana' which were much appreciated.

CONSTRUCTION OF 'KUTIR'

From the nucleus of a few small buildings, wherein the Divine Life Society was established by His Holiness Sri Swami Sivananda 25 years ago, Sivanandanagar has now grown into a world-famous dynamic centre of spiritual activities, with numerous departments and residential quarters where seekers of Truth engage themselves in *sadhana* and service under the guidance of Sri Swamiji. Many devotees, who spend their holidays at Sivanandanagar, and some of whom have chosen to stay here permanently, have built residential quarters in their own names or in memory of their relations. A single, medium-size room costs Rs. 2,500 to construct, which is done under the supervision of the Ashram's management. Those who wish to build rooms in their names may please ask for the particulars from the Secretary, Divine Life Society.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

It has come to the notice of the headquarters of the Divine Life Society, Sivanandanagar (Rishikesh), that Sri Swami Vasantananda, who is one of the disciples initiated by His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj into the holy order has been associating her activities with the name of His Holiness and propagating her own views and plans as identified with the instructions and orders of His Holiness, which, however, is not the fact.

In a recent leaflet issued by her in Madras she has made a statement which is likely to kindle caste prejudices and conflicts among the public, which is definitely against the teachings of the renowned saint Sri Swami Sivanandaji and against the spirit for which the Divine Life Society stands. It is well known to one and all, and also to be understood by everyone, that the Divine Life Society founded by His Holiness exists to uphold and teach the most catholic and non-sectarian gospel and tenets of the universality of spirit and the brotherhood of humanity, irrespective of caste, creed, colour, cult or sex. His Holiness stands above all distinctions even of religious faiths, and the Divine Life Society is an international institution dedicated to the cause of service of mankind in general through the dissemination of spiritual knowledge, and the propagation of the ancient culture of India. It is also a well-known fact that Sri Swamiji Maharaj accepts as his disciples persons from every community, caste and creed, and showers on all of them his care, love and guidance, equally. As such the leaflet referred to above does not have the approval of the Headquarters of the Divine Life Society.

We are also apprised of the fact that Sri Swami Vasantananda has been approaching the branches of the Divine Life Society and devotees of Sri Swamiji, against his wishes and instructions, evidently with the idea of starting a private institution of her own. The devotees of Sri Swamiji Maharaj and members and admirers of the Divine Life Society who give support to Sri Swami Vasantananda's activities under the impression that her activities are in any way connected with Sri Swami Sivanandaji or the Divine Life Society are thoroughly misinformed and the Divine Life Society or His Holiness do not hold themselves responsible for the same in any way, nor are they answerable to any repercussions that may arise as a consequence of her statements or activities whatsoever.

*General Secretary,
The Divine Life Society Headquarters,
P.O. Sivanandanagar,
(Rishikesh), Himalayas.*